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OFFICE OF PETITIONS

In re Patent No. 7,475,967 :
Nakagawa et al. :
Issue Date: January 13, 2009 : DECISION ON REQUEST FOR
Application No. 10/539,679 : RECONSIDERATION OF
Filed: June 16, 2005 : PATENT TERM ADJUSTMENT
Attorney Docket No. 5077-243/NP :

This is in response to the "PETITION UNDER RULE 1.705" filed February 16, 2009, which is properly treated under 37 CFR 1.705(d). Patentees request that the determination of patent term adjustment for the above-identified patent be corrected from three hundred forty-one (341) days to five hundred fifty-two (552) days.

The request for reconsideration of patent term adjustment is DISMISSED with respect to making any change in the patent term adjustment determination under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) of 341 days.

This application was filed on June 16, 2005. On January 13, 2009, the application matured into U.S. Patent No. 7,475,967, with a revised patent term adjustment of 341 days. The Office determined that the 211 days of Office delay pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B) and 37 CFR 1.702(b)^{1,2} overlaps with the 341

¹ Pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B), 37 CFR 1.702(b) provides, in pertinent part, that:

Failure to issue a patent within three years of the actual filing date of the application. Subject to the provisions of 35 U.S.C. 154(b) and this subpart, the term of an original patent shall be adjusted if the issuance of the patent was delayed due to the failure of the Office to issue a patent within three years after the date on which the application was filed under 35 U.S.C. 111(a) or the national stage commenced under 35 U.S.C. 371(b) or (f) in an international application.

days of Office delay pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(A) and 37 CFR 1.702(a)(1)^{3,4} accorded prior to the issuance of the patent. As such, the Office allowed only entry of the adjustment of 341 days. No additional days of patent term adjustment were entered at issuance under the three-year pendency provision. Given the applicant delay of 0 days, the patent issued with a revised patent term adjustment of 341 (341 - 0) days.

On February 16, 2009, patentees timely submitted this request for reconsideration of patent term adjustment within two months of the issue date of the patent. See 37 CFR 1.705(d). Patentees aver that the correct number of days of patent term adjustment is 552 days under the court's interpretation of the overlap provision as set forth in Wyeth v. Dudas, 580 F. Supp. 2d 138, 88 U.S.P.Q.2d 1538 (D.D.C. 2008). Specifically, patentee states that:

[p]ursuant to the ruling in Wyeth v. Dudas (DC Sept. 2008), Applicant hereby petitions under Rule 1.705 for a corrected Patent Term Adjustment of an additional 211 days since the present Patent did not issue within 36 months of the filing date (June 16, 2008). The corrected Patent Term Adjustment should now equal 552 days.

Petition under Rule 1.705, 02/16/2009, p.1

² The application was pending three years and 211 days.

³ 37 CFR § 1.702, provides grounds for adjustment of patent term due to examination delay under the Patent Term Guarantee Act of 1999 (original applications, other than designs, filed on or after May 29, 2000).

(a) Failure to take certain actions within specified time frames. Subject to the provisions of 35 U.S.C. 154(b) and this subpart, the term of an original patent shall be adjusted if the issuance of the patent was delayed due to the failure of the Office to:

(1) Mail at least one of a notification under 35 U.S.C. 132 or a notice of allowance under 35 U.S.C. 151 not later than fourteen months after the date on which the application was filed under 35 U.S.C. 111(a) or fulfilled the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 371 in an international application;

⁴ A first Office action was not mailed until July 23, 2007, fourteen months and 341 days after the date of completion of all 35 U.S.C. 371 requirements on June 16, 2005.

The Office has considered patentees' interpretation of the period of overlap, but finds it inconsistent with the Office's interpretation of the overlap provision, 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A). 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A) limits the adjustment of patent term, as follows:

to the extent that the periods of delay attributable to grounds specified in paragraph (1) overlap, the period of any adjustment granted under this subsection shall not exceed the actual number of days the issuance of the patent was delayed.

As explained in *Explanation of 37 CFR 1.703(f)*⁵ and of the United States Patent and Trademark Office Interpretation of 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A), 69 Fed. Reg. 34283 (June 21, 2004), the Office interprets 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A) as permitting either patent term adjustment under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(A)(i)-(iv), or patent term adjustment under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B), but not as permitting patent term adjustment under both 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(A)(i)-(iv) and 154(b)(1)(B). Accordingly, the Office implements the overlap provision as follows:

If an application is entitled to an adjustment under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B), the entire period during which the application was pending (except for periods excluded under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B)(i)-(iii)), and not just the period beginning three years after the actual filing date of the application, is the period of delay under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B) in determining whether periods of delay overlap under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A). Thus, any days of delay for Office issuance of the patent more than 3 years after the filing date of the application, which overlap with the days of patent term adjustment accorded prior to the issuance of the patent will not result in any additional patent term adjustment. See 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B), 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A), and 37 CFR

⁵ Likewise, 37 CFR 1.703(f) provides that:

To the extent that periods of delay attributable to the grounds specified in § 1.702 overlap, the period of adjustment granted under this section shall not exceed the actual number of days the issuance of the patent was delayed.

§ 1.703(f). See *Changes to Implement Patent Term Adjustment Under Twenty Year Term; Final Rule*, 65 Fed. Reg. 54366 (Sept. 18, 2000). See also *Revision of Patent Term Extension and Patent Term Adjustment Provisions; Final Rule*, 69 Fed. Reg. 21704 (April 22, 2004), 1282 Off. Gaz. Pat. Office 100 (May 18, 2004). See also *Explanation of 37 CFR 1.703(f) and of the United States Patent and Trademark Office Interpretation of 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A)*, 69 Fed. Reg. 34283 (June 21, 2004).

Further, as stated in the *Explanation of 37 CFR 1.703(f) and of the United States Patent and Trademark Office Interpretation of 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A)*, the Office has consistently taken the position that if an application is entitled to an adjustment under the three-year pendency provision of 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B), the entire period during which the application was pending before the Office (except for periods excluded under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B)(i)-(iii)), and not just the period beginning three years after the actual filing date of the application, is the relevant period under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B) in determining whether periods of delay "overlap" under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A).

This interpretation is consistent with the statute. Taken together the statute and rule provide that to the extent that periods of delay attributable to grounds specified in 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1) and in corresponding 37 CFR 1.702 overlap, the period of adjustment granted shall not exceed the actual number of days the issuance of the patent was delayed.

In this instance, the relevant period under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B) in determining whether periods of delay "overlap" under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A) is the period during which the application was pending before the Office (not including any periods excluded under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B)(i)-(iii)).

Pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(A) and 37 CFR 1.702(a)(1), 341 days of patent term adjustment were accorded during the pendency of the application for Office delay prior to the issuance of the patent. Pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B) and 37 CFR 1.702(b), 211 days of patent term adjustment accrued for Office issuance of the patent more than three years after the date the national stage commenced under 35 U.S.C. 371(f).

All of the 211 days of patent term adjustment under 37 CFR 1.702(b) overlap with the 341 days of patent term adjustment under 37 CFR 1.702(a)(1). Entry of both the 211 days and the 341 days is neither permitted nor warranted. 341 days is the actual number of days issuance of the patent was delayed.

Accordingly, at issuance, the Office properly entered no additional days of patent term adjustment.

In view thereof, the Office affirms that the revised determination of patent term adjustment at the time of the issuance of the patent is 341 days.

The Office acknowledges the submission of the \$200.00 fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.18(e). No additional fees are required.

It is noted that the address as cited on the petition differs from the address of record. Although a courtesy copy of this decision is being mailed to the address cited on the petition, all future correspondence will be mailed solely to the address of record until appropriate written instructions to the contrary are received.

Telephone inquiries specific to this matter should be directed to Kenya A. McLaughlin, Petitions Attorney, at (571) 272-3222.

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